

PRESS RELEASE

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MORGAN COUNTY GRAND JURY INDICTS TWO INDIVIDUALS FOR INSURANCE FRAUD

CHARLESTON, WV – West Virginia Insurance Commissioner, Jane L. Cline, announced today that Deborah K. Wildberger and Michael T. Hovermale were indicted by a Morgan County grand jury September 6, 2005 on charges of insurance fraud.

Wildberger allegedly solicited Mr. Hovermale, who rented a house from her, to burn down the dwelling in an attempt to collect insurance money. Wildberger represented to her insurance company that the home accidentally burned and subsequently collected \$71,698.62.

“Fraud is a crime that saturates every type of insurance and makes victims of all consumers by inflating premiums and increasing the cost of buying goods and services” Cline said. “The Insurance Commission will continue to aggressively investigate and seek prosecution for any type of insurance fraud and this case is representative of that commitment to the citizens of West Virginia.”

Wildberger was indicted on three felony counts of solicitation, conspiracy, and obtaining money by false pretenses. Hovermale was indicted on two felony counts of conspiracy to commit arson and arson.

The West Virginia State Police investigated the case in cooperation with the West Virginia Insurance Commission's Fraud Unit.

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